

Orectolobus

Orectolobus is a genus of carpet sharks in the family Orectolobidae. They are commonly known as wobbegongs, although this name also applies to the other members of the family.^[1] They are found in shallow temperate and tropical waters of the western Pacific Ocean and eastern Indian Ocean, chiefly around Australia and Indonesia, although one species (the Japanese wobbegong, *O. japonicus*) occurs as far north as Japan.

They have a mottled or spotted cryptic pattern, and have elongated dermal lobes in the region near the mouth. Most have a maximum length of 1.25 m (4.1 ft) or less, but two species, *O. halei* and *O. maculatus*, reach about 3 m (9.8 ft) (earlier reports of similar-sized *O. ornatus* is due to confusion with *O. halei*). These sluggish ambush predators are typically seen resting on the seafloor, and at least some species are nocturnal. While usually harmless to humans, they have been known to bite, but generally only if stepped on, approached too closely, or provoked.

Species

The species-level taxonomy in this genus has changed significantly in recent years, with one species described in 2006, three species described in 2008, and one in 2010, while *O. halei* generally was considered a junior synonym of *O. ornatus* until 2006. The tasselled and cobbler wobbegongs have been included in this genus, but today they are placed in *Eucrossorhinus* and *Sutorectus*, respectively.

- *Orectolobus floridus* Last & Chidlow, 2008 (floral banded wobbegong)
- *Orectolobus halei* Whitley, 1940 (Gulf wobbegong or banded wobbegong)
- *Orectolobus hutchinsi* Last, Chidlow & Compagno, 2006 (western wobbegong)
- *Orectolobus japonicus* Regan, 1906 (Japanese wobbegong)
- *Orectolobus leptolineatus* Last, Pogonoski & W. T. White, 2010 (Indonesian wobbegong)
- *Orectolobus maculatus* (Bonnaterre, 1788) (spotted wobbegong)
- *Orectolobus ornatus* (De Vis, 1883) (ornate wobbegong)
- *Orectolobus parvimaculatus* Last & Chidlow, 2008 (dwarf spotted wobbegong)
- *Orectolobus reticulatus* Last, Pogonoski & W. T. White, 2008 (Network wobbegong)
- *Orectolobus wardi* Whitley, 1939 (northern wobbegong)

References

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Spotted wobbegong, <i>Orectolobus maculatus</i>	
Scientific classification 	
Kingdom:	Animalia
Phylum:	Chordata
Class:	Chondrichthyes
Order:	Orectolobiformes
Family:	Orectolobidae
Genus:	<i>Orectolobus</i> Bonaparte, 1834
Species	
10, see text	

1. Froese, Rainer and Pauly, Daniel, eds. (2011). *Species of Orectolobus* (<http://www.fishbase.org/identification/SpeciesList.php?genus=Orectolobus>) in *FishBase*. February 2011 version.
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